expenditure incurred on advertisements and publicity has been Rs. 8.23 crores, Rs. 9.69 crores and Rs. 17.67 crores respectively.

(b) and (c) Yes, Sir. Advertisements do help in maintaining and further increasing the level of sales of steel and also serve other important objectives like building brand equity, resource mobilisation, increase in productivity etc. having regard to the increasingly competitive environment in which SAIL is operating. SAIL also requires to raise substantial additional resources from the market for funding its capital requirements, particularly since it does not receive any budgetary support from the Government. Advertisement campaigns help SAIL in maintaining and increasing its market share as well as building an image with its customers, general public and investors. An enlarged investor base is required for borrowing funds, especially since funds from conventional sources are now more difficult to obtain. Thus public deposits have increased by Rs. 525 crores from 1993-94 to 1995-96, and stand at Rs. 1653 crores as on 31/03/1996. Between 1993-94 and 1995-96 the production (Saleable Steel) increased by about 0.65 Million Tonnes (from 8.5 MT to 9.15 MT); total sales by about Rs. 3039 crores (from Rs. 11671 crores to Rs. 14710 crores); and expenditure on advertisement and publicity increased by about Rs. 9.44 crores (from Rs. 8.33 crores to Rs. 17.67 crores).

[English]

Shipbreaking Industry

5352. SHRI SANAT MEHTA : Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state :

(a) the position of Shipbreaking Industry in the country among the countries where shipbreaking activity is undertaken;

(b) whether fall in the shipbreaking at Alang has been noticed by the Government during 1995-96;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA) : (a) As per available information, India has ranked first for the past two years among the countries where shipbreaking activity is undertaken.

(b) and (c) According to Government of Gujarat, the number of ships broken at Alang during 1995-96 as against 1994-95 has been as under :

Year	Number of ships broken	Light Displacement Tonnes (LDT) (in lakh tonnes)
1994-95	301	21.7
1995-96	183	12.5

(d) The major reasons for fall in shipbreaking at Alang during 1995-96 are as under :—

1. Fall in the value of rupee against US Dollar, and

2. Recession in the scrap market.

VRS Scheme

5353. SHRI R. SAMBASIVA RAO : Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state :

(a) whether Voluntary Retirement Scheme has been introduced for employees in Bengal Chemicals and Pharmaceuticals Limited;

(b) if so, the number of employees who have opted it upto March 1996;

(c) whether any modifications have been made in the matter of payment of 3 months salary for each completed year of service instead of $1^1/_2$ months salary for each completed year of service applicable to the employees governed by this scheme;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the financial implications involved in the aforesaid scheme ?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir, based on the guidelines issued by the Department of Public Enterprises a scheme of Voluntary Retirement has been introduced in Bengal Chemicals and Pharmaceuticals Limited from January, 1992. The number of employees who have taken voluntary retirement under this scheme upto March, 1996 is 433.

(a) No Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(e) According to available information an amount of Rs. 6.50 crores have been provided to BCPL from NRF to meet the cost of the existing VRS.

Construction of Pilgrim Rest House at Nemawar

5354. SHRI SUSHIL CHANDRA : Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Union Government had sanctioned the construction of a pilgrim rest-house at Nemawar in Madhya Pradesh;

(b) if so, the details and the latest position of the said construction work at the sanctioned project;

(c) the sharing of cost between the Union Government and the State Government of Madhya Pradesh alongwith the amount made available so far by the both sides; and

(d) the time by which the said construction work is likely to be completed ?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRI SRIKANTA JENA) : (a) to (d) Yes, Sir. The Central Department of Tourism sanctioned Rs. 11.75 lakhs and released Rs. 2.00 lakhs in 1992 for the construction of Yatrika at Nemawar in Madhya Pradesh. The share of the State Government is Rs. 4.02 lakhs for the project and the State Government has released Rs. 2.00 lakhs in 1996-97 as part of the State share.

The construction work on the project has not yet commenced due to the objection raised by the Archaeological Survey of India on the ground that the selected site is situated near one of their protected monuments. The State Government is to identify an alternate site for the construction of the Yatrika.

Miserable Conditions of Tribes in Rajasthan

5355. SHRI KRISHAN LAL SHARMA : Will the Minister of WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that people of two tribes of Langas and Mangarians of Rajasthan are singers of world fame but are very backward with low level of education; and

(b) if so, the steps being taken by the Union Government to improve their status ?

THE MINISTER OF WELFARE (SHRI BALWANT SINGH RAMOOWALIA) : (a) Neither Langas nor Mangarians are specified as a Scheduled Tribe in respect of Rajasthan under the Constitution (Scheduled Tribes) Order 1950 as amended to date.

(b) Does not arise.

Supply of Rice to Mid-Day Meal Scheme

5356. SHRI JITENDRA NATH DAS : Will the Minister of FOOD be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that poor quality of rice being supplied to Mid-day Meal Scheme by FCI; and

(b) if so, the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to provide good quality rice to Mid-day Meal Scheme ?

THE MINISTER OF FOOD AND MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) According to the Guidelines of the Scheme, FCI is to supply Fair Average Quality (FAQ) rice to the implementing agencies in the States/UTs. FCI, New Delhi have issued instructions to their field offices to issue only good quality of foodgrains under this scheme.

Wheat Export

5357. SHRj SANAT KUMAR MANDAL : Will the Minister of FOOD be pleased to state :

(a) whether the attention of the Government has been invited to the newsitem captioned "Karnal bunt, price slump stymie wheat exports" appearing in the 'Business Standard', New Delhi, dated August 14,1996;

(b) if so, the facts of the matter reported therein;

(c) the reaction of the Government thereto; and

(d) the steps proposed to be taken in consultation with the Ministry of Commerce to streamline the wheat export procedures and compete in the international wheat market ?

THE MINISTER OF FOOD AND MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Some consignments of wheat from India were detained by the Turkish and Moroccan authorities as they were found to be infected by Tilletia Indica (Karnal Bunt) fungus. All consignments, except one, have been reexported from Turkey/Morocco. One consignment of wheat was still in quarantine in Morocco as on 26.7.96.

(c) and (d) Inspection of wheat for issuing Phytosanitary Certificate at the time of export for quarantine purposes is being carried out by the Directorate of Plant Protection Quarantine and Storage, Ministry of Agriculture or the Directors of State Agriculture authorised for this purpose by the Directorate of Plant Protection Quarantine and Storage, Govt. of India.

The necessary guidelines have been developed and issued to all Phytosanitary Certificate (PSC) issuing authorities is identified in the country in respect of phytosanitary Certification of exportable wheat by the Ministry of Agriculture. As per these guidelines, if the infection by 'Karnal Bunt' is detected in the exportable wheat consignment, the PSC is not issued. The PSC is issued conforming to the Plant Quarantine regulations of the importing country incorporating the additional declarations for the freedom from pest/diseases, if any.

In addition to above, Agricultural Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) has taken following measures :—

(1) Names of the 21 countries which do not allow import of Karnal Bunt affected wheat, have been